

# Year in Review Community Support

**T**HE Army demonstrated its commitment to communities around the world in 1999, not only through its response to disasters, but through a host of community-outreach programs.

## Response to Disasters

The devastation from hurricanes Georges and Mitch in the fall of 1998 expanded the Army National Guard's participation in New Horizons '99 in Central America.

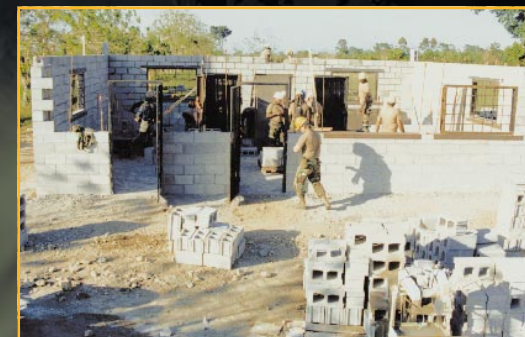
Guard soldiers from across the country helped Latin America recover from the widespread damage. More than 11,500 Guard troops worked on projects in Honduras, Nicaragua and the Dominican Republic, providing engineer and medical assistance, and participating in other aid missions.

More than 7,000 Army Reservists also served in the region, helping to repair damage caused by Hurricane Mitch. The soldiers repaired roads and bridges, drilled wells and conducted medical-readiness exercises.

And by the end of August 1999, reserve-component soldiers had responded to more than 100 disasters across the nation, aiding local authorities and performing search-and-rescue, security, debris-removal and restoration missions. Hundreds responded after storms in New York and Indiana, and thousands were called up after hurricanes tore through Puerto Rico, Mississippi, Alabama and Louisiana.

Throughout the first half of 1999, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' Jacksonville District and Antilles (Puerto Rico) Area Office personnel continued two massive recovery missions in Puerto Rico resulting from Hurricane Georges — debris removal and construction of temporary roofing for some 60,000 damaged homes.

In Texas, Guard soldiers had



responded to both hurricanes and floods in that state, while Florida Guard members dealt with hurricanes and a huge forest fire.

## Aid to Tornado Victims

Reserve-component soldiers aided in the recovery effort following one of the 10 worst tornado outbreaks in U.S. history, which swept through Ohio, Arkansas, Oklahoma and Kansas.

In Oklahoma, where 1,000 Army and Air Guard members deployed, the strongest winds ever recorded on Earth — exceeding 300 miles per hour — killed 43 people and injured about 800 along a 140-mile route of destruction, causing \$1 billion in damages.

Some 100 members of the USACE's Tulsa District mobilized while the storms raged — as many as 50 tornadoes spun through Oklahoma. Corps employees were on the scene before skies cleared to assist in recovery efforts.

Corps employees removed 500,000 cubic yards of debris from public

property alone — enough debris to fill a football field 28 stories high. At the same time, whenever possible, they recovered personal documents and keepsakes for eventual return to victims.

## Support to Kosovar Refugees

At Fort Dix, N.J., the Army Reserve installation served as home to more than 4,000 Kosovar refugees who awaited resettlement in the United States. USACE employees, Reservists and the installation's civilian staff helped set up and manage the "villages" that provided shelter, and distributed food and clothing.

The U.S. Army Soldier Show, in its 16th year, performed for the refugees on the first stop of its 1999 tour, which included 120 performances at 63 locations in 24 states and seven locations in Korea.

## Other Community Initiatives

In South Dakota, Montana and Alaska, Reserve dental and veterinary teams provided much-needed services to American Indians at the Rosebud Reservation, Northern Cheyenne Reservation and on the Arctic Slope, respectively, performing oral surgery, pediatric dentistry and other services.

The soldiers also taught children how to avoid dog bites, trained local residents on how to give emergency rabies vaccinations and

presented classes on safe food handling.

The Army's World Class Athletes showcased the Army to the world during their participation at the 1999 Pan American Games in July and August in Winnipeg, Canada, and in Zagreb, Croatia, when they participated at the Conseil International du Sport Militaire military world games.

Better Opportunities for Single Soldiers members from Fort Bliss, Texas, traveled to Mexico, to build a home for a needy family. In Germany, BOSS members participated in a program called "Read-to-Me," volunteering to help children at military community schools learn to read. In Korea, on Earth Day BOSS members planted numerous flowers, trees and shrubs to beautify building exteriors.

In Alaska, Missouri Guard soldiers, with Navy and Marine Corps engineers, spent their active-duty training stints working on a continuing project to build a 14-mile, two-lane highway on Annette Island, near Ketchikan, to connect an Indian community of about 2,000 to a new ferry terminal planned for the east side of the island.

Members of the 159th Aviation Regiment from Fort Lewis, Wash., provided high-altitude search and rescue to climbers stranded above 10,000 feet on Mt. Rainier.

And at virtually every other U.S. Army location, soldiers continued fostering friendship and goodwill in their communities by participating in programs from drug education and prevention to Christmas toy drives and everything in between.

